

Message Text

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12

ACTION EA-10

INFO OCT-01 NEA-09 IO-10 ISO-00 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-07

INR-07 LAB-04 NSAE-00 RSC-01 SIL-01 DODE-00 PA-01

USIA-06 PRS-01 SP-02 /060 W
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R 200030Z JAN 75

FM AMCONSUL MELBOURNE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2556

INFO AMCONSUL AUCKLAND

AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

AMEMBASSY CANBERRA

AMEMBASSY COLOMBO

AMEMBASSY DACCA

US MISSION GENEVA 24

AMCONSUL HONG KONG

AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD

AMEMBASSY JAKARTA

AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR

AMEMBASSY MANILA

AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

UMJPG/USLO PEKING 03

AMEMBASSY PHNOM PENH

AMEMBASSY SAIGON

AMEMBASSY SEOUL

AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE

AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

AMEMBASSY TOKYO

C O N F I D E N T I A L MELBOURNE 0066

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: ELAB, RP, XB, ILO, AS

SUBJECT: ASIAN LABOR MINISTERS CONFERENCE

REF: MANILA 706

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QM LABATT HAD OPPORTUNITY ON JANUARY 17 FOR DISCUSSION WITH

AUSTRALIAN DOL ASSISTANT SECRETARY, BARRY WATCHORN, OFFICER IN CHARGE OF PLANNING AND ARRANGEMENTS FOR LABOR MINISTERS CONFERENCE SCHEDULED APRIL 7-15, 1975. DURING DISCUSSION MATTERS CONTAINED IN REFTEL WERE EASILY RAISED BUT WITHOUT PARTICULAR EMPHASIS.

2. WATCHORN SAID THAT INVITATIONS TO CONFEREES HAD BEEN HELD UP FOR SIX WEEKS BY THE DEPT FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND THAT THE LAST INVITATIONS HAD NOT BEEN MAILED UNTIL WEEK OF JAN. 6. TO DATE THEY HAVE HAD VERY FEW REPLIES; OF COURSE NONE HAS COME FROM THE KOREAS, THE VIETNAMS OR THE PRC. APPARENTLY BASIS FOR ISSUING INVITATIONS WAS TO THOSE "INDEPENDENT COUNTRIES" WITH WHOM AUSTRALIA HAS ESTABLISHED DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS. THEREFORE NO INVITATIONS HAVE GONE TO SUCH PLACES AS AMERICAN SAMOA, GUAM, COOK ISLANDS OR TAHITI.

3. WATCHORN SAID SPECULATION IN HIS DEPARTMENT WAS THAT INVITATIONS TO THE KOREAS, VIETNAMS AND CHINESE RAN 8-2 AGAINST ACCEPTANCE.

4. AUSTRALIA INTENDS TO RAISE NO "IMPORTANT MATTERS" AT CONFERENCE AND WHILE INVITEES HAVE BEEN ASKED TO SUBMIT AGENDA ITEMS BY JANUARY 31, WATCHORN EXPECTS TO RECEIVE VERY LITTLE, IF ANYTHING, BY THAT TIME. IT WAS EVIDENT THAT HE DID NOT KNOW OF THE PHILIPPINES MOVE TO DELAY THE ASEAN CONFERENCE (PARA 2 REFTEL) AND ACCEPTED THAT CONFEREES ATTENDING THAT CONFERENCE COULD NOT BE EXPECTED TO PRODUCE AGENDA ITEMS UNTIL AFTER THEIR CONFERENCE. LABATT SPECULATES THAT IF OPLE RECOMMENDATION RESULTS IN DELAY OF ASEAN MEETING UNTIL LATE MARCH, AUSTRALIAN HOSTS FOR APRIL CONFERENCE WILL UNDERGO CHAOTIC PRE-CONFERENCE IN PREPARING AGENDA PAPERS.

5. DURING DISCUSSION WATCHORN INDICATED AUSTRALIA MOST ANXIOUS TO NOMINATE AMBASSADOR HAL COOK FOR CHAIRMANSHIP OF ILO GOVERNING BODY. GOA BELIEVES THIS IS THE LAST CHANCE FOR COOK SINCE HE IS DUE TO RETIRE WITHIN TWO YEARS. APPARENTLY ALL SECTIONS OF ILO ARE DELEGATION ARE SOLIDLY BEHIND COOK WHOSE PROFESSIONAL QUALIFICATIONS FOR THE CHAIRMANSHIP FORCES THEM TO FORGET ANY PERSONAL ANIMOSITY AGAINST HIM. LABATT RECALLS THAT COOK WAS NOT GREAT FAVORITE OF MINISTER CAMERON OR OF AUSTRALIAN COUNCIL OF TRADE UNIONS (ACTU) PRESIDENT BOB HAWKE
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DURING YEARS HE ACTED AS SECRETARY OF LABOR IN AUSTRALIA.

6. RETURNING TO SUBJECT RAISED IN REFTEL WATCHORN VOLUNTEERED INFORMATION THAT OPLE WAS THEIR CHOICE FOR 1975 ILO CONFERENCE PRESIDENCY. HE EXPRESSED CURIOSITY ABOUT USG REACTION TO SUCH CHOICE. OBVIOUSLY LABATT WAS NOT IN POSITION TO MAKE COMMENT AND WOULD APPRECIATE DEPARTMENT REACTION.

7. COMMENT: THIS WILL BE FIRST IMPORTANT INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE FOR WHICH SECRETARY OF LABOR DESIGNATE PETER WILENSKI AND ASSISTANT SECRETARY WILL BE RESPONSIBLE. THEY HAVE CHOSEN THE NEWSLY OPENED HILTON HOTEL IN MELBOURNE AND ARE RUNNING INTO SOME PLANNING STATIC WITH THIS VERY NEW ESTABLISHMENT. HOWEVER AT PRESENT MOMENT, AND WITHOUT THE CHINESE AND NORTH VIETNAMESE, CONFERENCE DOES NOT LOOK AS IF IT WILL ESTABLISH ANY LANDMARKS IN ASIAN DIPLOMACY.
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